(b) Does not arise.

(c) India is the largest producer and also the largest consumer of black tea in the world. The availability of tea for export, after domestic consumption, is therefore not as high as in some other countries.

(d) The Government has taken various steps to help the tea industry. These include withdrawal of the additional duty of excise of Re. 1 per kg on tea in the Union Budget for 2005-06, sanctioning of two schemes *viz.* incentives for production of orthodox teas and assistance to the two tea Research & Development Institutions for financing from the special fund created with collections of additional duty of excise on tea, issue of a new Tea (Distribution and Export) Control Order, 2005 in order to maintain quality and retain the brand equity of Indian teas, implementation of a price sharing formula between the small tea growers and manufacturers of tea with effect from 1st April 2004 in order to ensure that the small tea growers get a reasonable share of the price obtained by the manufacturer for made tea, reducing import duty on items of machinery used to improve productivity and quality of tea, including value addition, to an all inclusive rate of 5% etc. A Special Tea Term Loan (STTL) to restructure certain outstanding loans was announced in 2004. A major programme for replantation and rejuvenation of the old tea bushes in the country is under consideration. Steps taken to increase exports of tea include implementation of a medium term export strategy, encouraging production of quality teas especially orthodox type of teas, participation in major trade fairs/exhibitions abroad, lending promotional support to Indian exporters in marketing Indian brands, field sampling at speciality stores and in principal markets, exchange of tea delegations, launching media campaigns to increase consumer awareness etc.

Import-export policy on food items

1748. SHRI BALAVANT *ALIAS* BAL APTE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the present import-export policy on food items;

(b) whether the Indian farmers are not getting remunerative price for their produce due to excessive import of food items; and

(c) if so, the remedial measures being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) Quantitative restrictions on the import of various items including food items have been removed as a part of the process of economic liberalization and also in terms of our international commitments and obligations. The import of certain products of animal origin are, however, restricted/ prohibited for import. The import of foodgrains like wheat, rice, maize, other coarse cereals can be made only by nominated State Trading Enterprises. The import of beef is prohibited. The detailed item-wise policy for import is available in Schedule-I of the ITC(HS) Classification of Export and Import items, 2004-09.

The item-wise export policy is available in Schedule-II of the ITC(HS) Classification of Export and Import items, 2004-09. Most of the commonly grown food items such as cereals, pulses, oil-seeds, vegetables, fruits, natural forest produce such as honey and dairy products, animal products, manufactured/prepared or processed food items are freely exportable subject to availability being certified by the concerned Ministry, wherever necessary.

(b) As per Director General, Commercial Intelligence & Statistics' figures, there is no excessive import of food items and hence on this account domestic prices have not been affected.

(c) The import of 300 sensitive items including major food items is being monitored on a regular basis by the Government for checking any surge in imports. The Government has taken many measures to boost export of food items by giving special incentives such as duty free entitlement under Vishesh Krishi Upaj Yojana. This will enable Indian farmers to get more remunerative prices for their products.

Concessions given to Uttaranchal by DIPP

†1749. SHRI RAMADHAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the concessions given by Department of Industrial Policy and promotion to the newly created State of Uttaranchal on 7th January, 2003 and afterwards;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.